Harassment of Foreign Tourist by Touts and Beggars

2784. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign tourists face severe harassment from touts and beggars etc.;

(b) whether a proposal was mooted to form and station tourist Police in all major cities;

(c) if so, by when this proposal is going to be implemented;

(d) whether Government are aware of the incidents of snatching/cheating with a few tourists and being harassed;

(e) whether any steps are proposed to ensure that repeated and frequent harassment of foreign tourists is stopped; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) to (f) Prevention of harassment of tourists by touts and beggars is essentially a State subject. Hence this matter was discussed in the State Tourism Ministers' Conference held on 6th august, 1998 in new Delhi and it was resolved that the State Governments will consider legislation of suitable regulatory measures in the form of a tourism Trade Act. The representatives of the State Governments were also to consider setting up of "Tourist assistance Police" to ensure safety and security of tourists. Some State Governments already have "tourist police" to check harassment/ cheating of tourists.

Tourism and Travel Management Industries in Himachal Pradesh

2785. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to set up some more Tourism and Travel Management Industries in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have received any representation in this behalf, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Neither any such proposal nor any representation has been received by the Ministry of Tourism from the State Government.

Export House Status to Tourism

2786. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether tourism has recently been accorded export House status;

(b) if so, whether any institutional arrangements have been made for promoting Indian tourism product, services, facilities, projects management and technical consultancy;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether tourism units would henceforth be eligible like duty free imports, special import licenses and tax concessions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No. Sir, However, institutional arrangements already exist for promoting Indian Tourism etc. through the chain of Indian Tourist Offices abroad. The Ministry of Tourism monitors all the efforts of such offices.

(d) Hotels, Travel Agents, Tour Operators, Tourist Transport Operators shall be entitled for recognition as Export House/Trading House/Star Trading House/Super Star Trading House vide Government of India, Ministry of Commerce Notification No. 33(RE-98) 1997—2002 dated 26.11.98. Consequently, they shall be entitled to such benefits as specified in Chapter 12 of the Handbook of Procedures (Vol. I).